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of Mr. Norman Angell's economic doctrines. (London: King. 1916. 2s. 6d.)

MELROSE, C. J. *The data of economics. Expressly designed for the general reader.* (London: Mitre Press. 1916. Pp. 388. 7s. 6d.)

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### Economic History and Geography

*Commerce of Rhode Island, 1726-1800.* Vol. II. 1775-1800. Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Seventh Series, Vol. X. (Boston. 1915. Pp. 501. \$3.00.)

The second volume of this important publication opens with the Continental Association of 1774 in full operation and with the effects of the Prohibition act beginning to be felt. Trade with Great Britain had practically stopped. A few communications regarding remittances are recorded, but goods had ceased to be shipped. During the Revolution, trade was limited to Spain and Portugal, Amsterdam and Hamburg, and to the foreign West Indies. There is one mention of an American order for British goods shipped by way of Amsterdam, but after 1780 that channel was closed by the war. As early as 1781, however, British firms began to negotiate for American trade. In May, 1783, "intercourse between Great Britain and America being now quite open," one firm promises that orders from America "will be duly attended to." Yet this promise has no fulfilment as far as this volume furnishes evidence. "All Europe seems at present much engaged in an attention to their commercial interests," but English merchants are in a great state of uncertainty as to the issue, because "it is impossible to say what system may be adopted by this country relative to commerce with America." The question was not wholly a governmental one. Protheroe & Claxton wrote to Christopher Champlin in 1786: "Numberless have been the applications made to us to ship goods to different parts of America, but hitherto we have declined executing a single order, knowing the difficulty people there must labour under of making their remittances." Another firm wrote at the same time: "We have made a determination to open no new account with any person in America that requires any credit whatever." No commercial

treaty had been arranged with America, the American fishery was discouraged by heavy duties, and the Order in Council of July, 1783, had limited American intercourse with the British West Indies. One order is recorded as filled at Bristol in 1788, but after that date no further mention is made of trade with Great Britain.

But in other directions the peace of 1783 was scarcely signed when trade began to revive from the many misfortunes that were the consequences of the war and still more after negotiations for peace. The commercial activities of Rhode Island were with Ireland, Russia, Portugal, Sweden, Hamburg, the foreign West Indies, and the other American states. Full details of this activity can be obtained from the letters here printed. French merchants began to bestir themselves for a share in this trade. The frenzy of many adventurers poured immense quantities of goods into American ports, often ill-adapted to American wants or consumption. American merchants in their turn were no less active. Captain Bailey wrote in 1790 that Cap François was full to overrunning with beef, pork, flour, and fish. "There is about fifty sail of American vessels now lying here and others arriving daily." The French correspondents took particular pains to point out the commercial advantages of the reforms inaugurated by the French Revolution, which because of their "freedom and liberality" promised to give to the ports of France resources equal to those of any port in Europe for the products of America. But the sequel belied the promise. There was no trade with France recorded here after 1792. At the same time the uprising in Santo Domingo proved a terrible blow to American trade with that island. It stopped all business, brought selling to a standstill, held up American vessels, sixty-eight of which were seen lying at Port-au-Prince at one time, and led to serious seizures and consequent losses. The volume closes with the trade of Rhode Island in a seemingly declining condition.

One is struck with the frequent complaints of the poor quality of American staples. Flaxseed was badly cleaned and of poor measure, tobacco "most common, not cured at all, quite green and smelling like grass," casks were old and leaky, hoops rusty and rotten, tar, pitch, and turpentine very foul and short in weight, and oak bark was much adulterated. One comment in 1788 is significant; William Green, who had made the voyage to India, wrote:

I acknowledge the stipulation agreed upon between us, at a period when the American flag was looked up to as a cover of a free and independent commerce by individuals of every nation; but in the progress of my voyage and its event, so very far from that flag being useful to any purpose of mine, that in India I was constrained to relinquish it entirely; and at the instance of my friends and by the exertion of their interest in that country, I was permitted as a special favor and even then at heavy expense to assume the French.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

*Yale University.*

*Rural Economy in New England at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century.* By PERCY WELLS BIDWELL. Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. 20. (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences. 1916. Pp. 158. \$2.00.)

It is with pleasure that we welcome this contribution to the economic and agricultural history of rural New England. For reasons needless to specify the features of New England's agricultural economy have been given scant attention by historians and economists. Aside from Weeden and McMaster, Flint's *Eighty Years of Progress*, Colman's *Agricultural Survey of Massachusetts*, Carver's summary in Bailey's *Cyclopedia of Agriculture*, a few monographs on colonial land tenure and related topics, and some fugitive government reports on specific agricultural industries, we have little or no careful writing on New England's agricultural development.

New England affords a rich field for such investigation: the sources of materials are especially fertile; the periods of development are very distinctly marked; and the characteristic agricultural industries either have established themselves with comparative permanence or have passed through all the stages from incipient struggle to successful enterprise to final decline and practical abandonment.

The author in his analysis of New England's rural economy recognizes three phases: (1) the self-sufficing stage that reached its best exemplification about the beginning of the nineteenth century; (2) the period of transition to commercial agriculture, stimulated by the growth of manufactures, which continued down to its interruption by the Civil War; and (3) the period of decline extending from the Civil War to the end of the century, accompanied by Western competition, abandonment of farms, emigra-